DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 228 797 EC 151 651

AUTHOR Dalrymple, Nancy Justin; Rans, Christine Zang
TITLE Managing Behaviors of Seriously Emotionally Disturbed and Autistic Children. Teachers Exchange.
INSTITUTION Indiana Univ., Bloomington. Developmental Training Center.
SPONS AGENCY Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (DHEW/OE), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 79
CONTRACT 300-77-0422
NOTE 46p.
AVAILABLE FROM Developmental Training Center, 2853 East Tenth St., Bloomington, IN 47405 ($2.30, includes postage).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Autism; *Behavior Modification; Behavior Problems; *Classroom Techniques; Contingency Management; Discipline; *Emotional Disturbances; *Reinforcement

ABSTRACT

The manual provides information on practical ways for managing the behavior of emotionally disturbed and autistic children. The importance of routine and structure as well as of caring is emphasized in a chapter on building an atmosphere for learning. Assessment is seen to begin with teachers evaluating their own attitudes about behavior and then proceeding to determine which of the child's behaviors should be decreased and which increased. Management techniques are considered in terms of communication pointers (such as avoiding threats and being as neutral as possible when giving directions), positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement (including time out) and natural consequences (including cuing and modeling). (CL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED228797

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

MANAGING BEHAVIORS OF SERIOUSLY EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED AND AUTISTIC CHILDREN

BY:

Nancy Justin Dalrymple

Christine Zang Rans

Indiana University

Developmental Training Center

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Harry Schroeder

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EC151651

Acknowledgements:

Blizzard of 1978
Workshop of 1978

Dedicated to:

Tawanna, Vicki, Shelly, Tommy, Jimmy, and Michael

The writing and publishing of this booklet was supported in part under Contract Number C-300-77-0422 from the Bureau of Education of the Handicapped, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, U.S. Office of Education. The content of this material is the responsibility of the contractor and no official endorsement by the Office of Education or HEW should be inferred.

The use of masculine gender or any titles that connote masculine gender in this material is merely for convenient reference to people of both sexes and should not be construed as implying sex limitations.

Bloomington, Indiana 1978

PREFACE

One of the Indiana University Developmental Training Center's units devoted to providing services to the developmentally disabled, the School Age Unit concentrates on designing educational programs for disturbed children with multiple handicaps. The individual programs developed for the children incorporate roles for parents, as well as school personnel. The seriously disturbed child's prognosis for success is intricately dependent on parental/family involvement. The short-term residential setting provided through the School Age Unit educational program combines a structured behavior management orientation with a developmentally based psychodynamic curriculum. The staff orchestrates positive, success-oriented interactions for all participants to effect behavioral changes in clients and clients' families. The staff works as an interdisciplinary team to achieve the consistency and structure necessary to implement the program, the many facets of which are being presented in this series, Teachers Exchange. Titles include: Teaching Reading to Exceptional Children, Creating a Learning Environment for Exceptional Children, Classroom Programming for Emotionally Disturbed Children with Multiple Handicaps. The present title reflects still another aspect of assistance to teachers and parents.

Patricia Walsh-Williams, Ph.D.
Director, School Age Unit

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 1

Building An Atmosphere for Learning 3

Assessing Behavior 6

Management Techniques 11

Meeting Needs 11

Talking to Children 11

Giving Attention 18

Positive Reinforcement 20

Negative Reinforcement 26

Types of Interventions for Refusal Behaviors 29

Natural Consequence 33

Contingencies 33

Cuing 36

Modelling 37

Summary 39

INTRODUCTION

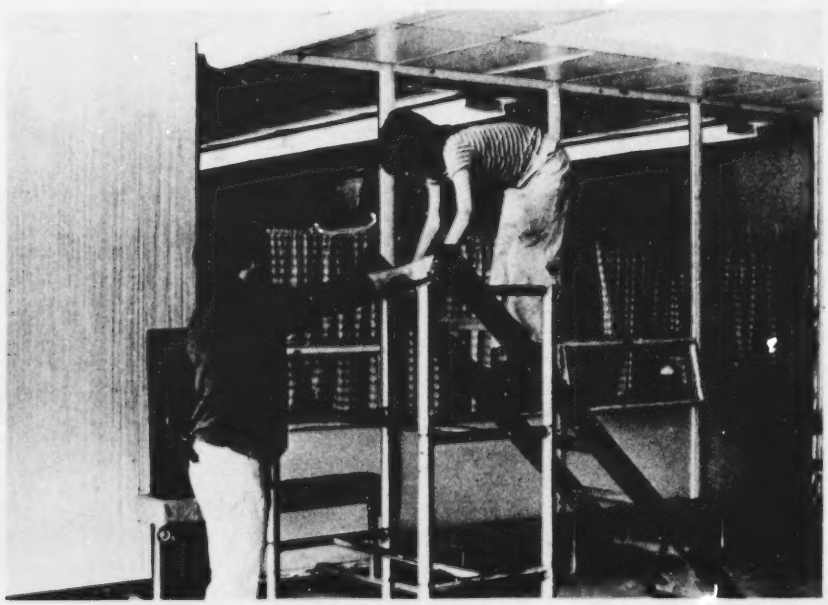
The children we teach are first of all people and only secondarily individuals with disturbing behaviors. They have needs for attention, care, love, and understanding. They have insecurities, fears, and doubts. They have rights just as you and I do. By making our classrooms accepting of the children's rights and needs, we are acknowledging each child's worth and uniqueness. Helping these children control their own behavior is our ultimate goal. We provide an atmosphere that preserves and builds self-awareness and self-respect. The children learn that we like them and care about them. At the same time, we establish clear expectations and are consistent in what we say and do.

We must remember that most emotionally disturbed children know when they are loved and accepted, and know when they are not. These children are in a difficult position. They seldom know what to do to be accepted, nor do some care. Their actions often make adults angry and rejecting. Striking back at the environment or withdrawing from interactions are ways disturbed children learn to control their world.

When a child hears people talk about him, he can tell by the tone of their voice and their expressions whether the conversation is good or bad even if he can't understand all the words. He may be concerned and anxious about why his name is being mentioned or why adults are looking at him.

Failure to please adults, failure to learn how to care for himself, failure to know how to cope with everyday life, and failure at school, are some of the frustrations a disturbed child faces. He seldom has the pleasure of playing with other children because he doesn't know how. He may retreat into himself or lash out at people or objects in his environment.

As teachers, we must insure success for our children. We must know the children well. We must make our classrooms safe and predictable enough for children to feel they can try. They must learn that they are worthwhile people. They must see that their teachers are consistent, supportive, and caring. They must learn the relationship between their behavior and the consequences of their behavior. A battle for control should be avoided. This booklet will describe ways to implement this philosophy.



BUILDING AN ATMOSPHERE FOR LEARNING

Routine and Structure

Emotionally disturbed and Autistic children have many insecurities. They often take a long time to trust people. The classroom environment can be designed to help children become more independent and self-sufficient. Before school begins, the classroom should be organized with the needs of the group in mind.

Any classroom for emotionally disturbed and Autistic children must have a predictable routine and basic structure. This provides the framework in which learning can take place. A basic schedule and routine should be established. Group and individual needs must be considered. The amount of group instruction, individual instruction, sitting time, freedom for exploration, snacks, playtime, opportunities for peer interaction, and access to sinks and restrooms must all be considered in planning a schedule that is appropriate for any given class or child. It is best for disturbed children if the schedule can remain as consistent as possible each day. For example, if 1:00-1:30 is art period two days a week, perhaps music could be scheduled the other three days. It is best to follow the same lunchtime routine each day and gradually teach them to do it independently.

Learning the routine allows children to know what is expected of them. As they learn, they gain competence in taking over responsibilities without constant adult supervision. This builds self-confidence. When it is necessary to change routines or restructure areas in the classroom, these changes should be explained to the children verbally, with pictures, with demonstration, or by involving the children in making the changes. It is imperative that they feel included.

Consistency

As teachers, we must do as we say and act in a predictable fashion. We must be alert to each child's needs, design an appropriate program and then execute it consistently. Lunch may be 15 minutes late, there may have been three bathroom accidents in one morning, or a child may have just broken the acquarium; but these factors should not control how we behave toward the children.

Further, we must remember to treat a behavior in the same way every hour of every day. The behaviors on which we are working cannot be overlooked because we are tired. Children will learn to depend on us if we are consistent and predictable. Acting in anger has no place in a classroom for disturbed children. If we become angry, it is best to leave the situation or tell the child why we are angry. This will help him learn to associate behavior with emotions.

Caring

In order to teach children, we must be concerned about and care for each one. Disturbed children and developmentally delayed children are dependent on adults in many ways, yet they need to learn to be as independent and self-respecting as possible. So much of their success depends on how the adults in their environment relate to them. As teachers, aides, or volunteers working with disturbed children, it is imperative that we respect and care for each one. Our general attitude affects all that we do. For instance, there may be a child you find impossible to teach in a positive manner. Your actions will tell that child how you feel about him. It is best to assess your feelings honestly and try to effect a change in your attitude. If you are not successful, it may be necessary to admit that you are not the one to teach him. A negative attitude and lack of caring can do much damage to a child in a short time.

ASSESSING BEHAVIOR

Emotionally disturbed children need to be taught to control many behaviors that most children learn to control as they grow and mature. The goal--teaching children to be independent of adults--stands for all children, but disturbed children must have a consistent, planned approach to move toward this independence. As teachers, we want the children to learn to function in a school setting, learn new skills, and become self-sufficient. We also want them to learn the social skills they need to be accepted at home and in their communities.

The teacher must intervene and help the child manage his behavior until he has learned how to do this successfully himself. This procedure is very much the same as that followed for preschool children. However, most teachers can be frustrated when they have a school-age child with many inappropriate school behaviors in their classroom. How can a battle for control be avoided? How can appropriate ways to interact be taught? How can motivation be provided? How can success be insured? Where should a beginning be initiated?

Assess your attitude about behavior in general.

What behaviors are acceptable in your classroom?

What behaviors are not acceptable?

What behaviors are you generally neutral about?

What behaviors depend on the situation?

Example: Child goes barefoot.

Depends on whether it is hot or cold.

Depends on activities.

Depends on whether shoes and socks are wet.

Depends on other inappropriate behavior.

Behavior I Accept	Neutral Behaviors	Behavior I Never Accept
Behaviors that depend on the situation		

Fill in the chart to see a picture of your view of behaviors.

Behaviors that depend on the situation are confusing to disturbed children. These children are not always skillful at reading people's minds or sizing up situations and have a difficult time with this inconsistency. They also may take advantage of the situation. It is best to eliminate most of these inconsistent rules and always explain an exception carefully, using words the child understands.

Example:

One rule states: Everyone wears shoes and socks.

Another rule states: To jump on the trampoline, you must take off your shoes.

When an exception occurs, an explanation is needed.

Exception: If the child's feet are wet from walking in the rain and his shoes need to be dried, an explanation is needed.

Explanation: Your shoes and socks are wet. I want you to take them off and put these dry ones on.

(If possible, be prepared for such emergencies.)

Children must be observed over a period of time in order to understand why they behave the way they do. During an informal observation period where notes and logs are kept, the positive and negative behaviors exhibited by each child should be listed. Decide what behaviors are important to change, what behaviors can be ignored, and what behaviors can be accepted. Decide which behaviors need to be decreased and which should be increased.

The following pages contain possible charts for gathering such information.

Child's Name	
Positive Behaviors	Negative Behaviors

Check (✓) those behaviors you want to increase.

Star (★) those behaviors you want to decrease.

For each of the behaviors starred or checked, keep a chart to see how often the behavior occurs, how long the behavior continues, what precedes it and what the consequence is. Choose no more than two or three behaviors from each group. When these behaviors are modified, move on to others. It is important to identify specific behaviors, and set priorities. Don't try to modify the whole child. You want success.

Name_____

	To Be Decreased			To Be Increased	
	Grabbing materials or people	Constant talking		Can follow routines.	Can sit in a group.
Frequency and duration during observation					
What precedes?					
What happens after behavior occurs?					

MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

After collecting concrete information about the children's behavior, techniques for intervening and changing the designated behaviors must be designed. It is important to continue collecting data as various interventions are implemented and to analyze this data regularly.

Meeting Children's Needs

One simple technique, but one often overlooked in working with autistic and disturbed children, is the necessity to provide what the child needs. This means knowing each child well enough to know when needs vary. Children may need a time and a place to be alone. If we as teachers are constantly making demands, the frustration may become intolerable. Maybe one child needs to rock, hide in a corner, hold a doll, or listen to music. Maybe another needs to pace the playground, go up and down the slide countless times, or ride his bike alone. Some children need to chew, bite, or spin. Providing safe outlets for these activities can help to decrease them. Activity levels, attention spans, interests, emotions, and abilities all vary widely. We must try to accommodate to all the individual needs in our program.

Talking to Children

Our messages to children are conveyed through the tone of voice, body language, and choice of words. It is important to create a relationship through which children can feel respected when attempting to gain compliance. The following techniques are helpful.

1. Be as positive as possible. Praise often. Notice the good things. Ignore things that don't matter. Many children are

conditioned to "No" or "Don't." Use these words sparingly, only when you must have immediate compliance. Be specific when praising. "You did a good job washing your hands" is better than, "You are a good boy."

2. Teach children to listen. Many repetitions of directions teach children not to listen to the words. Follow a set procedure such as: Say, "Come to the table, Wayne." Wait 10-15 seconds. Repeat with a gesture, "Come to the table, Wayne." If he does not comply, move toward the child and gently assist him to the table. In this way, Wayne will learn to listen and comply with directions. If you give a direction, make sure that it is followed. Children learn that they do not need to comply when adults do not consistently require them to do what was asked.

3. Know what you want the children to do. Be very clear in your own mind what you want children to do and why. Be sure you are making a reasonable request and one they are capable of complying with.

a. Example: "We will go to lunch when you show me you are ready" is too vague. "Ready" must be defined. "Wait quietly by the door, and then we will go to lunch" gives more information.

b. Example: "Trace your name on this paper three times," tells the child what to do but does not set any standard for quality. "Start here" (point to each place). Trace your name slowly and carefully over each one. "Stay right on the lines."

4. Give adequate information. Warn children in advance what is going to happen next. If there are changes, inform them and involve them with plans. Let the children know what will happen and what behavior is expected.

5. Use language that is as simple, clear, and concise as possible. Children can comprehend a limited amount of language directed at them. It is best to be concise. Loading too many directions and explanations on children creates frustration and confusion. Children can be trained to listen and follow two and three step directions if the language is kept specific and concise.

a. Example: "Pick up your paints, wash your hands, and go to music."

Some children may not be able to follow all of this and may give up or become angry. When several steps are required, break the directions up to allow the children to complete one step before a second command is given.

b. Example: 1) "It is time for music. Put the paints in the box."

2) When children are finished say, "Wash your hands."

3) Then, "Go sit on the rug for music."

6. Tell the children what to do and avoid telling them what not to do, whenever this is practical.

a. Example: Child throws food on the floor. Say, "Pick it up and put it in the sink." (The two-part direction may need

to be broken up into two one-part directions.) Avoid saying, "Don't throw food."

b. Example: Child finds some food on the floor and picks it up with the intention of eating it. Say, "Put it in the trash can," or "Leave it on the floor, it's dirty." Avoid saying, "Don't put that in your mouth."

c. Example: Child grabs a toy from another child. Say, "Ask Jennifer if you can play," or "Give the bell back to Gary." Avoid, "You must not grab the toy.

These statements give information to children that will help them learn what behavior is acceptable. The negative statements only tell them what is unacceptable.

7. Be as neutral as possible when giving directions.

The tone of voice, a facial expression, or the difference of a word can change the meaning of a question, direction, or statement. When giving a command, state what needs to be done and avoid challenges. Children tend to become defensive and try to avoid or do the opposite of what is asked when directions are given in a threatening manner.

a. Example: Say, "It's time to go to lunch." Avoid, "You must go to lunch right now."

b. Example: Asking the questions, "Where are you supposed to be?" or "What are you supposed to be doing?" can help the child correct his behavior if said in a neutral tone. However, an entirely different message can be conveyed by the tone of voice.

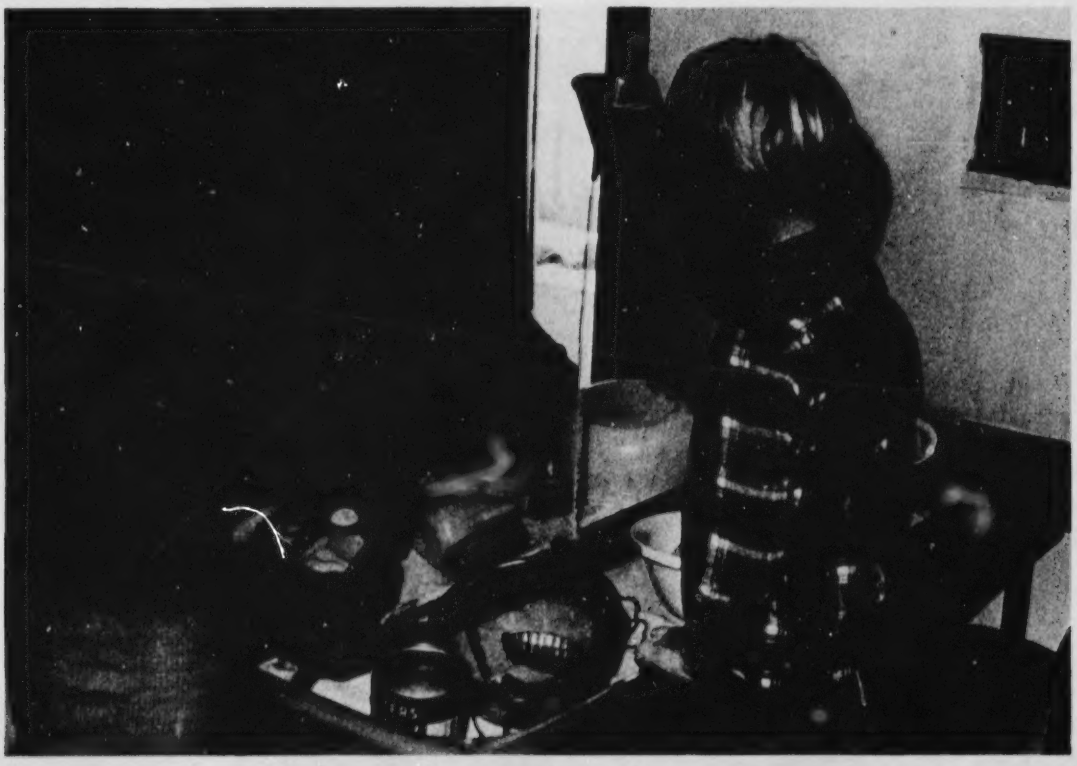
8. Avoid asking a question with a choice unless the children really have a choice.

Directions are given to be followed or to provide information. Do not ask a child if he wants to do something unless you are prepared to accept "No." Clear statements provide children with information needed to comply with the request.

a. Example: Say, "Come to the P.E. room, Jim." Avoid, "Are you ready for P.E.?"

b. Example: Say, "Come to the table for dinner." Avoid, "Let's come to the table, O.K.?"

c. Example: Say, "Write your name on the top of the paper." Avoid, "Can you write your name on the top of the paper?"



9. Teach children to respond immediately to learned commands or questions.

These help set expectations and permit the child to function more appropriately in a variety of settings.

Examples: "Wait." "Out-of-bounds." "Stop." "Find something to play with." "Where are you supposed to be?"

10. Label feelings

Children need to recognize feelings of others and need to feel comfortable expressing their own feelings. Labeling expressions of feelings helps them gain information.

a. Example: "I'm mad because you broke my necklace." "I'm happy that you zipped your coat all by yourself."

b. Example: "You are mad because you have to come in." "Going swimming makes you happy." "When John hits you, it makes you sad."

11. Avoid labeling children

Usually children know when they have done something "bad." Criticizing or attaching negative labels to children only reduces their self-esteem and self-confidence. Statements that clearly define the expectation, but do not attack the self-image, help children gain a positive picture of themselves.

Examples: "Go change your pants" is better than "You are a mess."

"Keep your hands to yourself" is better than "You are a bad boy. You hit Sally."

12. Avoid reprimands

Use set rules that are consistent and neutral. Reprimands are for the benefit of the adult, not the children. They have little meaning to children and will not change behavior.

Example: Avoid saying, "You know better than that." or "I've told you not to go in the street a hundred times."
Use: "The rule says, Ride bikes on the sidewalk."

13. Avoid threats

Threats are negative ways to give consequences. They often provoke a negative response.

a. Example: Say, "Sit on the mat and then you may go to lunch."
Avoid saying, "If you don't sit on the mat, you won't go to lunch."

b. Example: Say, "When you are quiet, we'll go to recess."
Avoid saying, "If you aren't quiet, you'll miss recess."

Teachers who use threats will find themselves in a bind. They may have to carry through with consequences they never meant at all.

c. Example: "If you throw the block at Jim again, you may not play with the toys any more."
This statement is vague, may act as a challenge and probably can not be enforced.

Giving Attention

What behaviors gain the most attention? Attention of any type may contribute to the repetition of that behavior. Positive attention often assures that a behavior will occur more frequently. Remember to give hugs, praise, and verbal recognition when children are doing what you want them to do. Take time to comment about a project, sit with a child for a moment, acknowledge his efforts. Work at noticing the children when they are behaving appropriately.

When inappropriate behaviors occur, ask the following questions about the attention being given to these behafiors:

1) Can conditions be arranged so that the behavior is not rewarded?

Can the behavior be ignored? Does it really matter if it continues?

Will the behavior diminish or become extinguished if it is ignored?

In order to answer these questions, determine if it is safe to ignore the behavior and whether the behavior really can be completely ignored. Then record some data, while ignoring the target behavior.

Name	1st day	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th
Child calls out teacher's name							

Time period_____

The behavior may increase in frequency initially, but if it can be completely ignored, it should decrease significantly.

2) Can the behavior be done over and over until it is no longer reinforcing? This is called satiation. The behavior can be allowed to continue until the child tires of it or the adult may insist that the behavior continue until the child is tired of it. When a behavior is not harmful and there is no great need to stop it immediately, satiation may be tried.

a. Example: Five-year-old Larry will only eat jello and bananas. Every meal is a battle. Give Larry only jello and bananas until he asks for something else. Make the meals for other people especially attractive.

b. Example: Jim plays in the water fountain at every opportunity. Insist that Jim play in the water fountain for a long period of time even while others are doing something that Jim badly wants to do.

Positive Reinforcement

To improve or increase a child's performance of an activity or behavior, arrange for an immediate reward after each correct response. When the new behavior is well learned, an intermittent schedule of reinforcement can gradually be established. This technique will move the child toward performing the learned behavior with few or no rewards.

What makes a child want to do a task? What makes school rewarding? Why does a child want to sit and work at something for ten or fifteen minutes?

Teachers often try to control children's behavior to conform to "school" standards. Forgetting that children must be taught appropriate school behavior in small steps, teachers sometimes set the stage for failure. To teach a child to act in a way in which he seldom or never has behaved, reward successive steps toward the final behavior. Children must experience success and receive reinforcement to learn.

Most disturbed children have received very little positive reinforcement from people. A teacher must look for things each child enjoys and discover what is rewarding for a particular child. This approach must be individualized.

Tangible rewards combined with praise and recognition are often most successful in teaching new behavior. Rewards may include food, such as candy, raisins, apple, or cereal; gum; listening to music; playing the piano; playing with a favorite toy; permission to do an activity that is self-stimulating like spinning lids or twirling strings; stickers on papers; or being with a favorite person. A squirt of juice, a hair blower, a flashlight, or a viewmaster might be effective. Reinforcers may have to be changed periodically and may need to be designed for each particular task.

Token systems can be established. The children are rewarded with a token to be traded in later for a reward. The tokens can be checks on a paper, chips put into a bag or box, or any other convenient item that can be tallied. The rewards to be "bought" may be tangibles or may be privileges.

Praise and success should be built into every reinforcement system. Eventually these rewards can replace the other forms of reinforcement. Recognition, smiles, or hugs may be enough to modify or maintain a behavior. Use this type of attention effectively. Success, accomplishment, and enjoyment of the task may eventually become reinforcing. This is the ultimate goal.

When the children are first learning to behave in a prescribed way, reinforcement will have to be immediate and frequent. They must learn to pair the behavior with the reward. Once the behavior is learned, the reward can be given intermittently rather than every time the behavior occurs. Taking the reward away immediately is punishment. Something pleasant is being withdrawn, and the desirable behavior probably will not be maintained.

Some children can learn to wait for reinforcement after they have learned to connect their performance with the reward. Raisins may be placed in a cup to be eaten later. Chips may be traded in daily or even weekly. The amount of delay and the ability to pair the reinforcement with the behavior depends considerably on the maturity and functioning ability of the children. Sometimes it takes a long time for a child to understand that his behavior controls the reinforcement.

What behavior is being reinforced? State precisely what the appropriate behavior looks like. Is it completion of a particular task? Is it an attempt to do the task? Is it sitting at the table? Do hands need to

be on the table and feet on the floor too? The criteria must be very clear in order to have the child understand and modify a specific behavior.

Example: Behavior to reinforce: Sitting in the chair for a ten-minute story.

Criteria: Child must have his bottom on the chair and feet hanging down. Disregard feet swinging, arms, and head moving.

Two examples of reinforcement follow:

1) Task - Match 18 small toys into six categories.

Reinforce first and second day every time it is done correctly, with or without help, using cereal paired with praise. If child has succeeded, reinforce third, fourth, and fifth day every time the child completes a match successfully alone. If child is succeeding, move to reinforcing intermittently with cereal, for example, first, third, fourth, seventh, eleventh correct response done alone--but praise every success.

Move to both praise and cereal on intermittent schedule. Drop cereal when child is doing the task 90-95 percent correctly. Give cereal only for completion of entire task. Continue intermittent praise to keep up the high percentage of correct response. Give praise at completion of task only, with adult still sitting next to the child through the task.

Teach the child to do the task independently. This will have to include a gradual reduction of the presence of the adult and an understanding that the completion of the t ask will bring the reinforcement. Praise, (and, in some cases, cereal) may have to be used again when teaching independent task performance.

If at any point the child cannot perform, evaluate the situation and decide if a change in reinforcement or the reinforcement schedule must be made.

2) Task - Come to activities on first request.

Jimmy will receive a chip <u>for coming to or going to</u> on the first request. This is to be used for transitions, not during lessons. Say: "Jimmy, it's time for your lesson." (information) "Come to the round table." (directions)

You must be close enough to him to be sure he hears. Walk toward the table or area of instruction. If he comes and sits down, give him a chip and say, "Good, coming the first time I told you," or something similar, so he will know exactly why he is receiving the reward. If he does not come, use previous interventions designed by the staff.

Jim can receive approximately 12-15 chips a day for following these directions:

Come to P.E.

Come in from recess and go to yellow room (must put bike away, hang up coat, and be in yellow room).

Come to reading lesson.

Come get ready for lunch (go to bathroom and wash hands).

Come to yellow room (same as above - after recess).

Come sit at the table.

Go to speech.

Come to music.

Come to story.

Come brush your teeth.

Time to _____and go to yellow room.

Come to orange room.

Go_____.

Come to snack.

The chips may be traded for:

Extra bike ride at 1:30 - 3 chips

Crackers - 1 chip each

More juice - 1 chip

Give a prize from the box each day at noon. Show Jimmy the prize box and make a chart explaining the other rewards. Help him through the trading-in until he learns that the chips "buy" rewards.

Chips should stay in his cubby when not in use. They do not leave the classroom. Chips should not be used as threats or bribes. "If you come on first call you get your chip." or "Do you want your chip? Then, come." We are trying to teach Jim to be responsible for his behavior.

Rewarding behavior that is incompatible with the inappropriate behavior is another way to use reinforcement. This alternative behavior may be opposite to the undesired behavior or may occur during the same time as the undesired behavior. The alternative behavior may distract from the inappropriate behavior and, therefore, may redirect the child toward more desirable activities.

1. Example: Julie runs away whenever she is taken to the large playground. For several days, give Julie 1-1 attention from an older peer, if possible, who will play with Julie on the swing, slide, or sandbox. An adult should be close by to reinforce Julie and the peer with appropriate rewards. Julie can not run and be rewarded for playing.

2. Example: Linda spins lids whenever she has the opportunity. During each lesson of 15 minute duration, ask Linda to place the lids in a specific location. When the lesson is finished, Linda may have her lids for five minutes. Spinning lids is incom-

patible with doing lessons, yet acts as a reinforcer. Linda is permitted control of the situation by being allowed to put the lids down and get them herself.

Rewarding working without lids makes working with lids incompatible.

3. Example: Reward Jamie for eating with his spoon. He can not be rewarded for eating with his fingers.

Negative Reinforcement

To stop a child from performing an undesirable behavior, arrange for him to terminate a mildly aversive situation as soon as his behavior improves. This is called negative reinforcement. He decides when the aversive situation ends. The child must know what behavior is expected of him to make the aversive situation end, and he must be in a position to demonstrate this behavior. As soon as his behavior improves, the aversive situation ends.

Types of Negative Reinforcement for Acting Out and Out of Control Behavior

A. Intervention: Startle

A loud noise or quick movement is followed by the direction. Example: Jane falls to the floor, refuses to move, and whines, and fusses. A direction is given, "Jane, get up and walk with me." If she remains noncompliant, blow a loud whistle, repeat the direction and extend your hand to help her comply. The loud whistle startles Jane into attending to you again. It is aversive to Jane. If Jane complies, the negative reinforcement is avoided.

B. Intervention-Quick Sit:

This is a quick 15-20 second sit wherever the behavior occurs. Example: Julie is given the direction: "Sit in the circle, and then we'll play the game." Julie continues to run wildly around the room. Approach Julie and physically assist while directing her verbally to sit. Give no attention while you are having Julie sit. After 15-20 seconds, when Julie is calm, direct her to "sit in the circle." Julie's readiness controls her return.

C. Intervention: Sit-Out

This technique removes the child from attention for a specified period of time. It is used for a recurring behavior problem. Example: Josh has great difficulty keeping his hands off younger children. He often grabs them, drags them, or manipulates them in other ways. Every time this behavior occurs, Josh is told, "You may not pull Kay around. Sit in this chair until you are ready to keep your hands to yourself." After two or three minutes, Josh is told, "You may join us now." He should be

returned to the activity with no comment. If necessary, Josh is taken to the sit-out chair or area. When possible, Josh returns by himself.

Example: Kim sometimes loses control exhibited by giggling, touching everyone, and loud talking. Kim is directed, "Sit out until you can be quiet and keep your hands to yourself." This is effective only if you know Kim wants to be part of the group. She is permitted to return on her own with no comment except perhaps an acknowledgement that she is there such as, "Here is your book, Kim. We are on this page." Kim knows why she had to sit-out. You do not need to go over it again. Be positive.

If children refuse to sit for the specified time, they may have to be held in the chair until they learn to follow the sit-out direction. However, this should not be for a prolonged period. Two to three minutes is usually sufficient. The original reason for the sit-out should not be forgotten.

D. Intervention: On-Hand

Child is placed on your hand by having to hold onto you or you to him. This technique is effective when the child is unable to control himself, exhibited by his inability to stay in place and follow directions due to excitement or a high activity level.

Example: Give the direction, "Chuck, you are not able to control yourself, I will have to help you. You must stay with me. You are on my hand until you calm down." When Chuck relaxes ask, "Are you ready to sit in your chair?"

If he says, "yes," release his hand and allow him to comply. If he is not ready, continue holding him.

E. Intervention: Time-Out

A child is placed in isolation, away from all attention until he can return to the group. The expectations must have been made clear by previous experience. This intervention is typically used when a child is in a rage and is likely to hurt others or himself. Attention is likely to make the tantrum worse. The child is removed to a safe area where there are no distractions and where he is safe to let the rage run its course. When the child is quiet, he is asked to rejoin the group, and nothing further is said. The child should return when possible to the activity that was interrupted by the tantrum. His behavior controls his return. In time, he may learn to return alone.

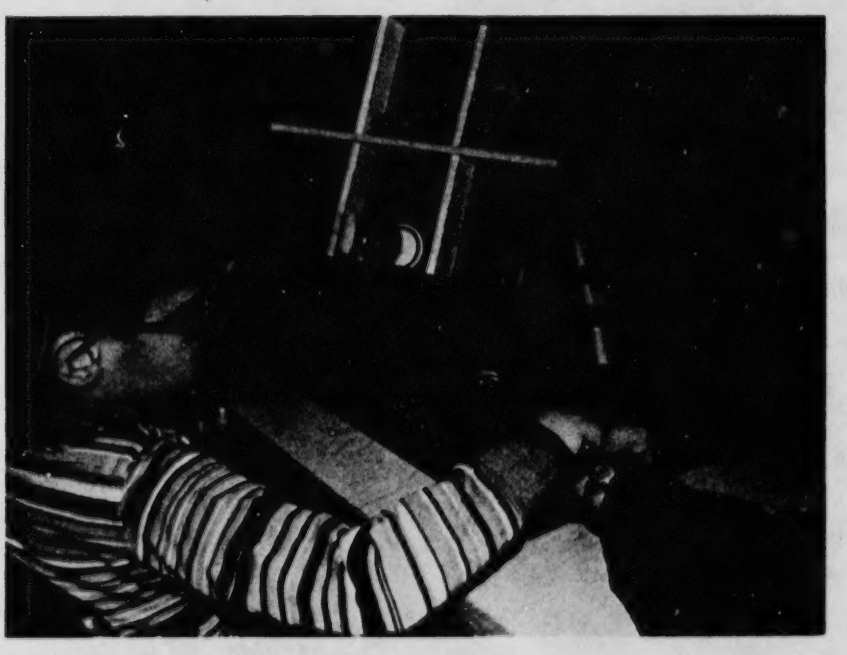
F. Intervention: A Hold

If there is no time-out area and a child is out of control, a safe hold can be applied by having him sit in front of you, crossing his arms, and holding him from behind. His legs can be held, if necessary, by placing your legs over his. Nothing should be said. When he relaxes, he should be told what activity he should do next.

Types of Interventions for Refusal Behaviors

A child may refuse to perform or do as he is asked. The refusal may be demonstrated by silent resistance, lack of eye contact, running away, lying on the floor, screaming, stomping, or any number of inappropriate behaviors.

When the child has been given a direction and he refuses, he must be helped to follow it. If a child is consistently not following a direction, the teacher should assess the reasons. However, if the direction is appropriate and reasonable, and the child does not perform, several interventions are appropriate.



A. Intervention: Taking the child through the task - without anger

The steps to perform the intervention are listed from the least restrictive to the most. Do not mention the negative behavior, but give information about the task.

1. Use step-by-step verbal directions, waiting after each one to insure that the task is completed.

Example: "Get ready for lunch." Larry doesn't move. "Larry, put away the blocks." Wait. "Wash your hands." Wait. "Get your coat and put it on."

2. Use gestures and tell the child how to succeed with the step-by-step approach.

3. Use physical prompts while telling the child how to accomplish the task. These may only need to be light touches or movements.

4. Use physical assistance, gently, but with authority, when the child needs help to do as he is asked. This should be done quickly with no anger. No verbalization is needed.

Example: "Lisa, pick up the pegs and put them in the box." Lisa throws the pegs, stamps her foot, and cries. "I will help you pick up the pegs and put them in the box." Ignore her screams and take her through the task. Physically assist Lisa in picking up the pegs. When you are finished, praise her and state what she has done. "Good you picked up all the pegs."

B. Intervention: Counting

Many children do not like to be physically assisted. Others resist complying immediately to almost any direction. The counting procedure is quite effective. It provides the child with information and gives him some time to comply. The method needs to be tailored to each child. However, the basic procedures described in the following example are the same.

Example: Say, "Jim, come to the listening table."

Wait 10 seconds.

If no response, state, "I will count to five, then I will help you."

Count straight through to five in 5 seconds, out loud, and in a neutral tone.

If Jim has not complied by the time you say "five," physically assist him quickly through or to the task.

Once you start to help him, do not say anything.

The waiting period, the number to which you count, how much physical assistance is needed, and how much you say, varies from child to child. Be sure this does not turn into a chase game. Be near the child, yet allow him to have the chance to comply. Expect him to comply.

NATURAL CONSEQUENCES

A natural consequence is an action that logically follows an inappropriate behavior. Children need to learn that their behavior controls the consequence. The consequence must be immediate and meaningful. It also must be within the abilities of the child. When something happens that has a consequence, the teacher should remain neutral and only interpret what the child must do.

1. Child spills milk. The child is told to get a towel and wipe it up. When the task is completed, he is given more milk.
2. Child splashes water over the floor when washing hands. The child is told to find the mop or towel and clean it up.
3. Child breaks up crayons. Crayons are taken away for the duration of the project.
4. Child misuses record player. Record player is put away for a specific time.
5. Child climbs out the window. The window is safely locked.
6. Child rides the bike in the mud after being told to keep it on the sidewalk. The child is not allowed to use the bike for the rest of the day.

Contingencies

A contingency is a situation in which a child is allowed to do something that is reinforcing to him after he has completed something else.

When teachers set contingencies, they must always carry them through. Do not set up rules that cannot be executed. Do not set contingenciesthat depend on the situation.

Stating a contingency provides information. If a child is screaming because he wants a popsickle, saying "Sit down, and then you may have a popsicle" tells him how to succeed. If a child is dawdling over getting his shoes and socks on, a reminder, "Put your shoes on, and then you may go outside" can give him an incentive or help him remember what he is doing.

Contingencies should always be stated positively and clearly. "Do this _____, and then you may do this _____," or, "When you do _____, then you may _____," are positive ways of stating contingencies. Trust is built through the consistency of always doing what you say. Always follow through and allow the child to do the reinforcing activity when he has completed the first task even if he forgets about it.

Example: Contingency statement, "Finish your workbook page, and then you may play with the hamster." The child brings up his completed page for correction and then goes to the puzzle table. Remind him by saying, "You finished your workbook page, now you may play with the hamster."

If contingencies are worded negatively, a different message if transmitted. A statement such as, "If you don't drink your juice, you won't get your cookie" becomes a threat. Avoid such commands as, "No recess unless you finish the paper." The child hears the "no", and may immediately rebel.

Contingencies can be set up ahead of time with the child, or they may need to be learned as part of his routine.

"Hang up your coat before you go into the classroom."

"Finish the lesson, and then you may go outside."

"Button and tie your coat, and then you may go outside."

When these are understood and learned, the child may test the rules now and then to be sure they still apply. When the contingency stands, he simply does not get the reward until he has performed. Sometimes in the teaching stages it is necessary to help the child through the first part to help him learn that you mean to do as you say.

You may have to restructure the day in order to use contingencies to the best advantage. Be sure there are activities the child likes throughout the day. Make sure the activity you will allow the child to do once he has completed the required task is reinforcing to him.

Examples:

"Finish your paper, and then you may get a drink."

"Drink your juice all gone, and then you may have a cookie."

"Clean up the blocks, and then watch T.V."

"Finish your paper, and then you may go to recess."

"Put on your coat, and then you may go outside."

"Take a bite of fishstick, and then you may have some chocolate milk."

"When you are sitting down, you may get in line."

"Play with the playdough, and then you may have your puzzles."

Cuing

To teach a child to remember to act at a specific time, arrange for him to receive a cue just before the action is expected rather than after he has performed incorrectly. Cues should be given only when needed and in as pleasant and neutral a manner as possible.

They may be gestured or verbal and may need to be learned over time then gradually faded out. Cues are especially useful to children who have problems applying rules or behaviors across settings.

For autistic children we may provide more cues than are needed, or we may not always be aware of when they are needed. It is best to set up a few cues that a child can learn well until he is ready to try on his own.

Examples:

1. Set words - Time for lunch, get your coat, go outside, your turn.
2. Set gestures - palm up for stop, fingers to lips, lights out.
3. Gradual fade out -

   Scott interrupted everyone and could not understand that he should wait. His voice became louder until he was noticed.

   a) When Scott first approached, he was cued with, "Scott, I'm talking. I'll talk with you in a minute." (Scott would have his turn in 60 seconds or less.)

   b) Next, "Scott, I'm talking. Wait."

   c) Next, "Wait, Scott," (finger to mouth).

   d) Next, the gesture to mouth with a slight touch to Scott's shoulder.

   e) As Scott approached, he was touched lightly in recognition.

Modelling

Appropriate behavior models sometimes provide the most impressive components for teaching appropriate behavior. Models can be either adults or peers. With severely disturbed children older peers and adults often must be used as models until the child is able to benefit from children closer to his own age. Sometimes teachers may need to recruit children from other classes to be models for short periods of time. Children who do not tune in to others will need to be taught to observe and be prompted to perform as others are doing.

Example: Going through the lunch line.

Judy can not wait more than 30 seconds. She has difficulties sequencing, following directions, and handling confusion. Structure the learning experience in the lunchroom to increase waiting, picking up utensils, sitting with peers, eating, and returning the tray. Place a capable peer with Judy as she is learning and cue Judy to the actions of this child.

SUMMARY

Teachers of autistic children and children with behavior disorders must have well planned environments, carefully designed programs and the ability to be flexible. They must be calm. They must be willing to act as advocates for their children and help the rest of the school understand them. Sometimes they seem to work in isolation without the needed support of staff members or parents.

It is best if the teacher manages all behavior within the classroom. If an instructional associate is part of the team, she should also be able to handle behavior. The person working with a child should carry through with the management. When a child is being instructed by a team, all members must be consistent. If a principal or additional staff member must be called to intervene, the classroom teacher loses some of the trust she is trying to build. If a child is too strong and violent to be a certain classroom, other arrangements will have to be considered. Alternatives may include a physically strong teacher or aide, a time-out room, a person trained in the art of gentle self defense, or a residential school.

Plans will have to be made for management of behavior when children are not in the classroom. The teacher needs to assume the role of case manager and keep the staff members who are working with her pupils informed. This information needs to include current interventions. If possible, periodic staffings should be conducted so all staff members are working together as a team. Arrangements with bus drivers, lunchroom personnel, and maintenance people should be considered part of the teacher's responsibility.

Parents must become part of their children's advocacy team. Behavior management techniques can be taught to parents whenever feasible. Parents should be invited to staffings and must be part of the educational plan. Teachers need a good support system to do the job well. They may have to build this themselves from both the school system and the community.